

NOTE: H.R. 2330, approved November 28, was assigned Public Law No. 107-76.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State,
the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002
November 28, 2001

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2500, the "Department of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002."

I appreciate the bipartisan effort that has gone into producing this Act. The bill abides by the agreed upon aggregate funding level for Fiscal Year 2002 of \$686 billion and supports several of my Administration's key initiatives including:

- \$100 million to support a backlog elimination initiative to achieve a universal 6-month processing standard for all immigration applications;
- 570 additional Immigration and Naturalization Service agents to protect our Northern and Southern borders;
- \$50 million grant program in the Office of Justice Programs to aid counties along the Southwestern border with their costs of detaining and prosecuting drug cases referred to them by Federal law enforcement agents;
- \$50 million for drug courts, which provide a supervised treatment alternative to prison sentences for non-violent drug possession offenders, to enable Federal assistance to over 120 new or existing drug court programs. To date, over 57,000 offenders have completed drug court programs, and their recidivism rate is much lower than that of comparable offenders;
- \$15 million for grants to create community-based task forces for reducing youth violence and to assist State and local prosecution of firearms offenses, and \$9 million for the U.S. Attorneys

to hire dedicated prosecutors who will appropriately prosecute juvenile gun offenders and those who supply them with guns;

- \$20 million to assist State and local law enforcement agencies with the costs associated with methamphetamine laboratory clean-up; and
- \$5 million for a faith-based prison pre-release pilot project to reduce the rate at which ex-offenders are returned to prison through intensive counseling and family and community transition instruction.

In addition, at this critical time, when we are mounting a world-wide effort to defeat terrorism, I appreciate that this bill provides significant new funding for our Federal law enforcement agencies in the Department of Justice, our diplomatic operations overseas, and for enhanced embassy security.

I note that Section 612 of the bill sets forth certain requirements regarding the organization of the Department of Justice's efforts to combat terrorism. This provision raises separation of powers concerns by improperly and unnecessarily impinging upon my authority as President to direct the actions of the Executive Branch and its employees. I therefore will construe the provision to avoid constitutional difficulties and preserve the separation of powers required by the Constitution.

Section 626 would require the President to submit a legislative proposal to establish a program for the compensation of victims of international terrorism. I will apply this

provision consistent with my constitutional responsibilities. In addition, subsection (c) of that section purports to remove Iran's immunity from suit in a case brought by the 1979 Tehran hostages in the District Court for the District of Columbia. To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, the Executive Branch will act, and encourage the courts to act, with regard to Subsection 626(c) of the bill in a manner consistent with the obligations of the United States under the Algiers Accords that achieved the release of U.S. hostages in 1981.

Section 630 prohibits the use of appropriated funds for cooperation with, or assistance or other support to, the International Criminal Court (ICC) or its Preparatory Commission. While section 630 clearly reflects that Congress agrees with my Administration that it is not in the in-

terests of the United States to become a party to the ICC treaty, I must note that this provision must be applied consistent with my constitutional authority in the area of foreign affairs, which, among other things, will enable me to take actions to protect U.S. nationals from the purported jurisdiction of the treaty.

In addition, several other provisions of the bill unconstitutionally constrain my authority regarding the conduct of diplomacy and my authority as Commander-in-Chief. I will apply these provisions consistent with my constitutional responsibilities.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 28, 2001.

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Remarks to the United States Attorneys Conference November 29, 2001

Well, John, thank you very much for those kind words. And I appreciate your strong leadership. It is a principled leadership; it is a steady leadership; and it is a leadership that is good for America.

I guess we call you General. [*Laughter*] That means you all are in the Army. [*Laughter*] And I am glad you are.

I also want to thank Larry Thompson for his good work. Thank you for being here, Larry. And where's Al Gonzales, who is my—Al led the effort to scour the country for the best to serve as U.S. attorneys, and I appreciate his hard work. And I suspect you new U.S. attorneys appreciate his hard work, as well. [*Laughter*]

But Al has been my lawyer for a long time and was a lawyer for the State of Texas and was a judge for the State of Texas. And he is a pretty special guy, and I'm glad he's here in Washington with me.

And I'm glad you all are here, as well. Thank you for coming. I want to welcome you here.

I want to welcome the new U.S. attorneys. I want to congratulate you. I must tell you that we set a high standard, and you met it. And for that, I hope you're proud. And I am grateful that you are willing to serve the country, particularly at this time.

I know you know this, but I want to remind you that you have got a significant commitment to the security and safety of the American people. We all do. That's our job, and it's a job we will keep.

The security and safety of our people was threatened before September the 11th. In many neighborhoods, there's too much gun violence in America. Despite all the progress against crime, teenagers—almost as many teenagers die from gunshot